

# Claims

- [c1] 1. An electroless plating method comprising the steps of:
- preparing a substrate having an insulating body and a conductive pattern formed on the insulating body;
  - adhering a catalytic metal serving as a catalyst of an electroless plating onto the insulating body and the conductive pattern;
  - forming selectively a protection film, or an oxidizing agent used to oxidize the catalytic metal on the catalytic metal in a space portion S between the conductive pattern; and
  - forming selectively a metal layer on the conductive pattern by the electroless plating.
- [c2] 2. An electroless plating method comprising the steps of:
- preparing a substrate having an insulating body and a conductive pattern formed on the insulating body;
  - adhering selectively a catalytic metal serving as a catalyst of an electroless plating onto the conductive pattern; and
  - forming selectively a metal layer on the conductive pattern by the electroless plating.

- [c3] 3. An electroless plating method according to claim 1, wherein the step of forming selectively the protection film or the oxidizing agent is carried out by an ink jet method.
- [c4] 4. An electroless plating method according to claim 1, wherein the step of adhering the catalytic metal onto the insulating body and the conductive pattern includes the step of coating an activating solution containing ions of the catalytic metal to deposit the catalytic metal by an oxidation–reduction reaction.
- [c5] 5. An electroless plating method according to claim 1, wherein the conductive pattern is arranged in a state that the space portion between the conductive patterns has a plurality of different dimensions, and the protection film or the oxidizing agent is formed selectively in portions, which are smaller than a predetermined dimension, out of the space portion between the conductive patterns.
- [c6] 6. An electroless plating method according to claim 2, wherein the step of adhering selectively the catalytic metal onto the conductive pattern includes the step of coating selectively an activating solution containing ions of the catalytic metal on the conductive pattern by an ink jet method to deposit selectively the catalytic metal on

the conductive pattern by an oxidation–reduction reaction.

- [c7] 7. An electroless plating method according to claim 1, wherein the catalytic metal is palladium, and the metal layer formed by the electroless plating is a nickel layer or a copper layer.
- [c8] 8. An electroless plating method according to claim 2, wherein the catalytic metal is palladium, and the metal layer formed by the electroless plating is a nickel layer or a copper layer.
- [c9] 9. An electroless plating method according to claim 1, wherein the protection film is a resist film or a polyimide film.